



Senator Feinstein Urges Rejection of Santa Rosa Island Hunting Plan

Paralyzed Veterans of America Find Island to be Inaccessible

August 2, 2006

Washington, DC – *With the Paralyzed Veterans of America proclaiming Santa Rosa Island “not viable” as a location for their hunting and recreation, U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) today urged the Senate Armed Services Committee leadership to reject efforts by the House of Representatives to overturn a previous court settlement and establish a hunting reserve on the island.*

In letters sent to Senators John Warner (R-Va.) and Carl Levin (D-Mich.), chairman and ranking member of the Committee, Senator Feinstein noted that the version of the FY 2007 National Defense Authorization Act approved by the House currently includes language to provide enhanced hunting opportunities for disabled veterans on Santa Rosa Island, which a recent investigation by the Paralyzed Veterans of America found to be inaccessible due to natural obstacles.

The version approved by the Senate does not include this provision and a Senate-House Conference Committee is now considering ways to rectify the differences between the two bills. Senators Warner and Levin are the lead negotiators for the Senate on that Conference Committee.

“It has become increasingly clear that it is neither a practical nor viable option to use Santa Rosa Island as a hunting reserve for injured and disabled veterans,” Senator Feinstein said.

The following is the text of Senator Feinstein’s letter to the two Senators (a copy of the letter from the Paralyzed Veterans of America is attached as a PDF file:

I am writing in regard to a provision in the House-version of the FY07 National Defense Authorization bill, H.R. 5122, which would overturn a court-approved settlement concerning the removal of non-native deer and elk on Santa Rosa Island, part of Channel Islands National Park in California. Specifically, the stated purpose of this provision is to provide enhanced hunting opportunities for disabled veterans on the island.

It has become increasingly clear that it is neither a practical nor viable option to use Santa Rosa Island as a hunting reserve for injured and disabled veterans. This view is reinforced by a

July 26th letter I have attached from the Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA) – an organization which previously expressed support for the Santa Rosa Island provision in H.R. 5122. Notably, the PVA has now reached the conclusion following an investigative visit to Santa Rosa that the ‘numerous obstacles inherent to the island, including ingress and egress, logistics, personal safety and cost, far outweigh the possible, limited benefit it could provide.’

In light of this new development, and the ongoing opposition to the House provision by the National Park Service, Representative Lois Capps (in whose district Santa Rosa Island is located), myself and Senator Boxer, along with the authorizing committee of jurisdiction – the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, I would strongly urge you to prevent the Santa Rosa Island language from being included in the final version of the FY07 National Defense Authorization Act.

Thank you for your consideration of this request and for all you do to represent the best interests of our Nation’s servicemen and women.

Sincerely,

Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator

###